

## COMMONSENSE HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. FORTENBERRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, Terry recently wrote me, "Congressman, I can buy a car in Iowa, beer in Kansas, a fishing license in South Dakota, land in Colorado, but health insurance? No place but Nebraska."

Mr. Speaker, in these difficult times people are hurting. Families, and especially seniors, need more affordable options, from what they put on their table to what they put in their medicine cabinets.

My constituent, Terry, pointed out a commonsense reform—purchasing health insurance across State lines. There are other reforms, such as appropriately addressing preexisting conditions, promoting a culture of health and wellness to drive down costs, creating new insurance risk pool models for small businesses and families, strengthening community health centers, and expanding opportunities for health savings accounts. These changes could mark a truly bipartisan policy effort that increases competition among health insurance companies and benefits all Americans.

## REFORM HEALTH CARE NOW

(Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the President said our health care is too costly. I agree. But the Democrat plan doesn't reform or eliminate the \$1 trillion in waste, so you will pay more—not just your children or your grandchildren, but you. How? Their plan has a wheelchair tax, a hospital bed tax, asthma device tax, artificial hip tax. Diabetes supplies, medicines, home oxygen equipment, all taxed. Have a heart attack? There's taxes on heart monitors, heart valves and pacemakers. How about health insurance? They tax you if you have it and tax you if you don't. Employer paid insurance? They tax them if they will and they tax them if they won't. States can opt out of the government-run plan, but you still have to pay the taxes. It's taxation without hospitalization.

Let's reform Medicare, reform Medicaid, reform health care, cut the waste, improve quality, let people buy across State lines, join groups, make insurance personal, portable, permanent. Millions of Americans are begging us to fix the problems, not finance them. Millions of Americans can't all be wrong.

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## HEALTH CARE

(Mr. WILSON of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of liability reform.

I have heard from people all across my district in Ohio about how much they need health insurance reform. I have heard from Dawn, a small business owner who has a story that is truly heartbreaking.

Due to a doctor's mistake when her son was 23 days old, Dawn's son was left with lifelong brain damage. For the past 10 years, she and her husband have struggled to find insurance for her son. When no insurance would cover him, they were forced to pay out of pocket for all of his doctors' appointments, physical therapy, and they are currently living at the poverty level. Between the two of them, they have held as many as five jobs to try to cover their son's medical expenses.

Last year, in my district in Ohio, there were 1,270 health care-related bankruptcies. Without comprehensive health care insurance reform, Dawn's family could be the next one.

We are at a breaking point. We must come together and bring security and stability to our health care system for families like Dawn's and for everyone else in this country.

## HEALTH CARE

(Mr. WHITFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, there are many provisions of the Democratic health care bill that we support, like taking care of the preexisting condition problem.

But we also oppose cutting Medicare by \$500 billion over 10 years. We oppose taking \$155 billion out of the hospital account. We oppose reducing Medicare Advantage by \$123 billion. We oppose taxing, putting a surtax on small business men and women, thousands of them. We oppose individuals being penalized 2.5 percent of their gross income if they do not buy a policy. We oppose requiring employers to pay 8 percent of the gross wages of their employees if they do not provide insurance. Then, after all of that, there still is \$200 billion needed to pay for this expensive health care bill.

Those on this side of the aisle are willing to work with the other side of the aisle if they would simply open the door and give us the opportunity.

## HEALTH CARE

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I respect a great deal my colleague from Kentucky who is on the Energy and Commerce Committee, but I heard him mostly talk about what he opposes.

That's the problem with the Republican mantra on health care reform. They are opposed to so many things, but we really don't know what they are

supportive of. The fact of the matter is from the very beginning we tried to include both sides of the aisle on this health care reform, but essentially what we heard from the Republican side was they didn't like this, they didn't like that, and, ultimately, they didn't like anything.

Now we are forced, I suppose, to bring a bill to the floor which probably will get mostly or maybe only Democratic support, but it will cover everyone. It will provide that universal health care that has been so lacking with so many people now who can't find health insurance or find it increasingly unaffordable. The public option is a very important part of that, because basically it will create competition and bring down costs for the average American.

We are moving forward now. We would like to have bipartisan support. But if we don't, we are still moving forward, because we know that the promise of health care for every American is really crucial.

## PROTECTING AMERICAN SENIORS

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, as Democratic leaders retreat behind closed doors to craft their government takeover of health care, American seniors are rightly concerned about what \$500 billion in cuts in Medicare will mean to them.

Throughout this process, Democrats have made clear that they intend to force American seniors to carry a large share of the cost of reform, and this includes eliminating Medicare Advantage. Democrats understand how negative the reaction will be when seniors learn that they are scrapping this program, so they have placed a gag order on companies that provide this coverage, stopping them from communicating with seniors on the ramifications of this change.

That's right, the Democrats who promised transparency and accountability have gone behind closed doors to craft legislation and have used the power of government to stop dissenters from communicating with American seniors. Well, American seniors are right to be concerned.

With the job-killing tax increases the Democrats are also talking about, American workers need to be concerned as well, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps that is why the Democrat majority will not allow us to have 72 hours to read the bill before it's voted on.

## HEALTH CARE

(Mr. ROSKAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, if you are from the northwest suburbs of Chicago, today you woke up and you